

CERTAIN
DOCUMENTS,

&c. &c.

CONNECTED WITH

TRACTS FOR THE TIMES,

No. 90.

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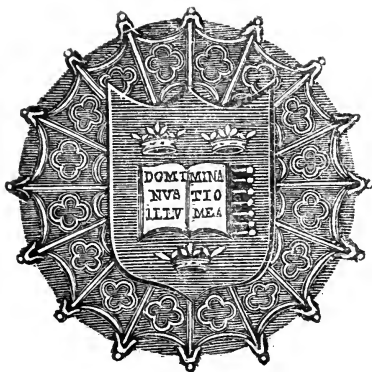
OXFORD,
PRINTED BY W. BAXTER.

1841.

The Tract No. 90 bears the date of Monday, January 25, but it was not published in Oxford before Saturday, February 27, 1841.

The Letter of the Four Tutors, by which public attention was first called to the Tract, was circulated in Oxford on the morning of Tuesday, March 9, 1841.

The Resolution of the Hebdomadal Board was circulated in Oxford on the morning of Tuesday, March 16, 1841.



At a Meeting of the Vice-Chancellor, Heads of Houses, and Proctors, in the Delegates' Room, March 15, 1841.

CONSIDERING that it is enjoined in the STATUTES of this University, (TIT. III. SECT. 2. TIT. IX. SECT. II. §. 3. SECT. V. §. 3.) that every Student shall be instructed and examined in the Thirty-nine Articles, and shall subscribe to them; considering also that a Tract has recently appeared, dated from Oxford, and entitled "Remarks on certain passages in the Thirty-nine Articles," being No. 90 of the Tracts for the Times, a series of Anonymous Publications purporting to be written by Members of the University, but which are in no way sanctioned by the University itself;

RESOLVED, That modes of interpretation such as are suggested in the said Tract, evading rather than explaining the sense of the Thirty-nine Articles, and reconciling subscription to them with the adoption of errors which they were designed to counteract, defeat the object, and are inconsistent with the due observance of the above-mentioned STATUTES.

P. WYNTER,
Vice-Chancellor.

(From the *Standard* of March 20, 1841.)

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—As some of the correspondents of the morning papers seem to be at a loss to understand the nature of the official document lately issued at Oxford with the Vice-Chancellor's signature, it may be as well to make it known, that it is an authoritative declaration of the executive of the University as to the meaning of the statutes, and is intended as a notice to all Tutors of Colleges and Public Examiners, by virtue of certain statutes recited in the preamble, that if they adopt such modes of interpretation of the Thirty-nine Articles as are suggested in No. 90 of the "Tracts for the Times," they will do so at their peril.

ACADEMICUS.

(From the *Standard* of March 26, 1841.)

TO THE EDITOR.

Oxford, March 25.

SIR,—As a morning newspaper has said that the late condemnation of Mr. Newman's Tract was the act of a small majority of the "Hebdomadal Board," I think it right to acquaint you, that the resolution to take public and official notice of the Tract passed the Board with only two dissentient voices; and that one of the two Gentlemen who formed this minority expressed his sense of the danger and mischief of this particular Tract. These circumstances are perfectly well known to every one here, although there is no official publication of the divisions or debates of the Board.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

ACADEMICUS ALTER.

THE LETTER OF THE FOUR TUTORS.

To the Editor of the "Tracts for the Times."

SIR,—Our attention having been called to No. 90 in the series of "Tracts for the Times by Members of the University of Oxford," of which you are the Editor, the impression produced on our minds by its contents is of so painful a character, that we feel it our duty to intrude ourselves briefly on your notice. This Publication is entitled "Remarks on certain Passages in the Thirty Nine Articles;" and, as these Articles are appointed by the Statutes of the University to be the text-book for Tutors in their theological teaching, we hope that the situations we hold in our respective Colleges will secure us from the charge of presumption in thus coming forward to address you.

The Tract has, in our apprehension, a highly dangerous tendency, from its suggesting that certain very important errors of the Church of Rome are not condemned by the Articles of the Church of England: for instance, that those Articles do not contain any condemnation of the doctrines,

1. Of Purgatory,
2. Of Pardons,
3. Of the Worshipping and Adoration of Images and Relics,
4. Of the Invocation of Saints,
5. Of the Mass,

as they are taught authoritatively by the Church of Rome; but only of certain absurd practices and opinions, which intelligent Romanists repudiate as much as we do. It is intimated, moreover, that the Declaration prefixed to the Articles, so far as it has any weight at all, sanctions this mode of interpreting them, as it is one which takes them in their "literal and grammatical sense," and does not "affix any new sense" to them. The Tract would thus appear to us to have a tendency to mitigate, beyond what charity requires, and to the prejudice of the pure truth of the Gospel, the

very serious differences which separate the Church of Rome from our own, and to shake the confidence of the less learned members of the Church of England in the Scriptural character of her formularies and teaching.

We readily admit the necessity of allowing that liberty in interpreting the formularies of our Church, which has been advocated by many of its most learned Bishops and other eminent divines; but this Tract puts forward new and startling views as to the extent to which that liberty may be carried. For if we are right in our apprehension of the Author's meaning, we are at a loss to see what security would remain, were his principles generally recognised, that the most plainly erroneous doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome might not be inculcated in the lecture-rooms of the University and from the pulpits of our churches.

In conclusion, we venture to call your attention to the impropriety of such questions being treated in an anonymous publication, and to express an earnest hope, that you may be authorized to make known the writer's name. Considering how very grave and solemn the whole subject is, we cannot help thinking, that both the Church and the University are entitled to ask, that some person, besides the printer and publisher of the Tract, should acknowledge himself responsible for its contents.

We are, Sir,
Your obedient humble Servants,

T. T. CHURTON, M.A.

Vice-Principal and Tutor of Brase-nose College.

H. B. WILSON, B.D.

Fellow and Senior Tutor of St. John's College.

JOHN GRIFFITHS, M.A.

Sub-Warden and Tutor of Wadham College.

A. C. TAIT, M.A.

Fellow and Senior Tutor of Balliol College.

(From the *Standard* of March 17, 1841.)

Mr. Newman has at length avowed himself the author of the 90th number of the "Tracts for the Times." The following is the avowal of the Rev. Gentleman:—

"Oriel College, March 16, 1841.

"MR. VICE-CHANCELLOR,—I write this respectfully to inform you, that I am the author, and have the sole responsibility, of the Tract on which the Hebdomadal Board has just now expressed an opinion, and that I have not given my name hitherto, *under the belief that it was desired that I should not.* I hope it will not surprise you if I say, that my opinion remains unchanged of the truth and honesty of the principle maintained in the Tract, *and of the necessity of putting it forth.* At the same time, I am prompted by my feelings to add my deep consciousness, that every thing I attempt might be done in a better spirit, and in a better way; and, while I am sincerely sorry for the trouble and anxiety I have given to the Members of the Board, I beg to return my thanks to them for an act, which, even though founded on misapprehension, may be made as profitable to myself as it is religiously and charitably intended.

"I say all this with great sincerity, and am,

"MR. VICE-CHANCELLOR,

"Your obedient Servant,

"JOHN HENRY NEWMAN."

This is a badly written letter; but it is not our business to criticise style. We have, in order to direct our readers' attention to them, printed in italic characters a few words which we think stand in need of explanation; first, Mr. Newman says he acted "*under the belief that it was desired that he should not give his name.*" By whom did he believe

that the desire was entertained? From the first he must have been well aware that the University, and every friend of the University, was anxious to relieve the University of all responsibility for the Tracts, which could not be done in any other way so well, as by showing that they were the work of a man of no authority, mark, or influence in that learned body; and after the four Tutors had called for the name of the Author of the Tract No. 90, it must have been quite apparent to Mr. Newman that *the desire* entertained was precisely the reverse of that which he pretends to have believed to be entertained.

Again, Mr. Newman speaks of the necessity of promulgating his Popish doctrines, but does not condescend to explain the ground of this necessity. The following extract from a correspondent, to whom we are deeply indebted for many favours, may, perhaps, supply the deficiency:—

“ The ‘ necessity’ supposed to be meant by him is said to
 “ be that certain of his followers began to feel themselves
 “ obliged to go over to the Roman Catholics, and he there-
 “ fore took rather a bolder line than hitherto, to enable them
 “ to satisfy themselves without leaving the Church of Eng-
 “ land. I should imagine that his method, instead of stop-
 “ ping the few, will hasten the many. It is quite certain
 “ that ardent imaginations, over inflamed with the views
 “ that he suggests they may indulge in with impunity, will
 “ not content themselves with the withered and shrunken
 “ Popery that he would fain substitute in the place of our
 “ Scriptural Church and sound moderation of religious
 “ views. It is expected that another more formal reply will
 “ be issued by the party. The chief objection to Mr. N.’s
 “ letter is the assertion of the ‘ honesty of the principle,’ for
 “ this must apply to the principle of interpretation. If
 “ there was a necessity of his publishing the Tract, it is a
 “ necessity of his own making, or of the party’s imagining,

“and is only a still stronger proof of the dangerous effects
 “of the principles which have been so long advocated in an
 “under-current.”

(From the *Times* of March 9, 1841.)

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—I have read with deep concern your remarks, in last Saturday's paper, on the character of the religious party lately formed by some members of the University of Oxford. I trust that your object was merely to do justice, and to recall what you considered to have been unjust censure in times past. But it seems to me that in doing this you have overstepped the line of impartiality, and expressed yourself in terms which convey high praise, and almost deny the existence of any ground for censure. To find *The Times* absolutely embarked in the cause of a small, and, I cannot but fear, a most dangerous party in the Church, would be lamentable indeed. In the hope that this is not the case, I would crave a small space for a few brief remarks on the article in question.

I would offer an exception or two as to the terms of praise applied to the Oxford Tractarians.

1. “That they are learned and pious persons.”—To be learned is surely no very remarkable distinction among the members of the University of Oxford. To be earnest and pious after their own fashion is a praise that cannot be withheld from Beckett, or Hildebrand, or Loyola, or even from many founders of most mischievous sects in Protestant days. Few sects or parties in the Church, indeed, have been formed by other than “learned and pious persons.”

2. “That they have propagated their opinions without agitation.”—Men who have the best possible vantage-ground need not to resort to outcries. Wesley or Irving

would have gladly relinquished all their out-of-doors excitement, could they but have been allowed to instil their notions into the minds of our college youth.

3. "That to *their* teaching the great reaction which is "visible in favour of the Church is mainly owing."—The fact of such a reaction is obvious enough ; but its connexion with the *Oxford Tracts* is about as clear as the connexion between the Goodwin Sands and Tenterden steeple. Nine years ago the Liberals would have outpollled the Conservatives on an East Surrey election in the proportion of two to one. Now the Conservatives can outpoll the Liberals in the same proportion. But how many of these electors have ever seen the *Oxford Tracts*? Not a score!

4. "That their doctrines have gained access to the minds "of the greater part of the clergy."—Never was there a greater miscalculation! I know, indeed, that these gentlemen occupy a prominent position, and are active; but they surely cannot persuade themselves that they constitute even a respectable minority in the Church. I remember lamenting, a few months back, their increase, in the presence of an aged rector of this metropolis; when he stopped me by asking how many there were of all the hundreds of clergy in London and its vicinity who preached these doctrines; and I found, to my surprise, that it was difficult to point out a dozen out of all the hundreds so located!

But there is a still better test just now before the public.

Some months since the *Oxford Tract* party put forth a proposal for the publication of a series of works, selected from the writings of the Laudian divines and the Nonjurors. About the same time another scheme came forth, for the publication of the works of the Reformers—a class of divines especially disliked by the Tractarian school. The subscribers to the first of these two schemes are about *seven or eight hundred*: the subscribers to the second plan are nearly *four thousand*!

5. "That their doctrines are calculated to win back the "people to the Church."—Very strangely adapted to such a purpose, seeing that they are filled with complaints and fault-finding. Mr. Froude declared that he "hated the "Reformers," that he "liked Bonner," and thought Bishop Jewell "an irreverent Dissenter." Mr. Newman speaks of our communion service as filling him with "grief and impatient sorrow." And the very last number of the "Tracts for the Times" exhorts us to "let the Church sit still; let "her be content to be *in bondage*; let her work *in chains*; "let her go on teaching with the stammering lips of *ambiguous formularies* and *inconsistent precedents*, and principles but partially developed." Whether this is the sort of language which is likely to recommend the Church to the people, let any reasonable man decide!

6. "That their obedience to all lawful authority should "lead us to leave them to the judgment of the Bishops."—To that judgment we must leave them: but of the tendency of their publications, poured forth upon the public in swarms, the public must of course form and express an opinion. That the Tractarian party are giving the Bishops much trouble, is abundantly notorious; that the Bishops of Exeter, Chester, and Chichester, have felt it their duty publicly to warn their clergy against them, is matter of record; that the Bishop of London has had rebukes to administer, the Bishop of Winchester cautions to inculcate, the Bishop of Salisbury injunctions to issue, is all sufficiently well known. But, while we interfere not between the diocesan and his clergy in these matters, we may, as bystanders, regret the rise of a system which already involves so many injurious discussions, and must inevitably strengthen the hands of dissent.

I remain, Sir,

Yours very respectfully,

A PROTESTANT.

(From the *Morning Chronicle* of March 15, 1841.)

It is generally thought, by those who have considered the subject attentively, that the authors of the Oxford Tracts have presumed too much on their supposed success with the clergy of the establishment. The Tract No. 90 could hardly go down with a Protestant nation like the English. The people of this country generally believe, that the doctrines of the Church of England not only differ, but differ essentially, from the doctrines of the Church of Rome; and an attempt to prove that the difference is imaginary is rather too bold an experiment on the settled conviction of the nation. The authors of the Tracts have been very industrious in paving the way for Popery, but they have over-rated the effect produced on the public mind by their labours, if they suppose that the time is at length arrived for proclaiming that a Roman Catholic and a Church-of-England-man labour under a misapprehension when they attribute to each other a difference in doctrines.

(From the *Standard* of March 6, 1841.)

Lord Morpeth and his master, Mr. O'Connell, have, to some extent, succeeded in their attempt to injure the cause of religion, by imputing to the Established Church and to the University of Oxford an inclination to the doctrines of the "non-Protestant" sect that has lately risen to smooth the path for Popery. We are no theologians; we are contented with the Scriptures and the Articles and Liturgy of the Established Church—Articles and Liturgy which, as far as the judgment of unlearned men can aid us to know the truth, seem to rest upon a Scriptural foundation; but if we must look beyond these instructors, we shall certainly prefer, to

the guidance of men who prove the comprehensiveness of their views by a devotion to copes and tippets—by denying to the Protestant Churches of Scotland and of the Continent the means of salvation which they allow to the Church of the Inquisition and of St. Bartholomew—by refusing to Baxter and Doddridge that blessed hope which they extend to Alexander the Sixth and M'Hale—by telling us that “the *sure* word of prophecy” has not given warning of an apostacy now of twelve centuries’ duration—who, in short, would distract mankind by disputes upon the credentials of the messenger and the proper formalities of his introduction, to the utter neglect of the full and faithful promulgation of the message—we would prefer, we say, to the guidance of *such* men, writing bad Latin and badly expounding plain Greek, the guidance of the learned and pious fathers of the Reformation, who have told us that Popery *is* the great apostacy foretold—that the Pope, as *a corporation sole* (to borrow a phrase familiar to lawyers), *is* Antichrist—*is* the man of sin; and after the fathers of the Reformation, we would follow the wise and learned and pious men of our own day, who have received the sacred mantle with their offices. Few of the Bishops have as yet spoken of the “non-Protestant” sect, but the few who have spoken have proved how little they countenance its doctrines. We think it seasonable to offer proofs, and we shall begin with one to whom all the sincere Protestants of the empire look up with hope and gratitude. The following is an extract from a Charge lately delivered by the Bishop of Exeter. Speaking of the “non-Protestants,” his Lordship says—

“I lament to hear them speak of adherence to ‘the Bible
 “and nothing but the Bible’ as ‘an unthankful rejection of
 “another great gift equally from God.’ I lament to see them
 “state ‘as the sounder view, that the Bible is the *record* of
 “necessary truth, or of matters of faith, and the Church

“ Catholic’s tradition is’—not a most venerable witness, or
 “ most useful assistant in interpreting it, but—‘ *the* interpreter
 “ of it.’

“ I lament to see them following indeed the order of Bishop
 “ Hall, but widely departing from his truly Protestant senti-
 “ ments on more than one important article. Of the ‘ *worship*
 “ of images,’ (for so that great divine justly designates what
 “ they more delicately call ‘ the *honour* paid to images,’) they
 “ say only that it is ‘ dangerous in case of the uneducated,’
 “ that is, of the great part of Christians. But Bishop Hall
 “ treats it, as not merely dangerous to some, but as sinful in
 “ all; as ‘ against Scripture :’ ‘ the book of God is full
 “ of his indignation against this practice ;’—and ‘ against
 “ reason.’

“ I lament to read their advice to those who are contending
 “ for the truth against Romanists, that ‘ the controversy about
 “ transubstantiation be kept in the back ground, because it
 “ cannot be well discussed in words at all without the sacri-
 “ fice of godly fear :’—as if that tenet were not the abundant
 “ source of enormous practical evils, which the faithful ad-
 “ vocate of truth is bound to expose.

“ I lament too the encouragement given by the same
 “ writers to the dangerous practice of prayer for the dead.”
 “ I cannot but deplore the rashness which has prompted them
 “ to recommend to private Christians the dedication of parti-
 “ cular days to the religious commemoration of deceased men,
 “ and even to furnish a special service in honour of Bishop
 “ Ken, founded apparently on the model of an office in the
 “ Breviary to a Romish Saint.”

“ ‘ If after having been then (in baptism) washed once for
 “ all in Christ’s blood, we again sin, there is no more such
 “ complete ablution in this life.’ Passages like this, however
 “ they may be explained, tend to rob the Gospel of the blessed
 “ Jesus of much of that assurance of the riches of the goodness

“ and mercy of God in Christ which is its peculiar message—
 “ its ‘ glad tidings of great joy :’—‘ come unto me *all* ye that
 “ labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’ Our
 “ Church teaches us to apply this blessed promise to those who
 “ are ‘ heavy laden with sins’ committed after baptism.”

“ Lastly, I lament, and more than lament, the tendency at
 “ least, if not the direct import of some of their views, ‘ on
 “ reserve in communicating religious knowledge ;’ especially
 “ their venturing to recommend us to keep back from any
 “ who are baptized the explicit and full declaration of the
 “ doctrine of the atonement. I know not how such reserve
 “ can be made consistent, not only with the general duty of
 “ the Christian minister, to be able to say with St. Paul, that
 “ he has ‘ not shunned to declare all the counsel of God,’ but
 “ also with the special and distinct requirement of our own
 “ Church.”

Not less explicit is the rebuke of the Bishop of Chester :—

“ It is daily assuming a more serious and alarming aspect,
 “ and *threatens a revival of the worst evils of the Romish*
 “ *system*. Under the specious pretence of deference to an-
 “ tiquity, and respect for the primitive models, the founda-
 “ tions of our Protestant Church are undermined by men
 “ who dwell within her walls ; and those who sit in the
 “ Reformers’ seat are traducing the Reformation. It is again
 “ becoming matter of question, whether the Bible is sufficient
 “ to make man wise unto salvation ; the main article of our
 “ national confession,—justification by faith,—is both openly
 “ and covertly assailed ; and the stewards of the mysteries of
 “ God are instructed to reserve the truths which they have
 “ been ordained to dispense, and to hide under a bushel those
 “ doctrines which the apostles were commanded to preach to
 “ every creature.”

The learned Bishop of Chichester speaks with equal plain-
 ness :—

“ I cannot, nor do I wish to conceal my opinion that the
 “ doctrines which they advocate, should they become popular,
 “ would in other hands be *essentially injurious to the cause*
 “ *of pure Protestantism*, and with it to sound Christianity in
 “ this country. In this case, the respectability of the advo-
 “ cates must not make us blind to the danger likely to ensue
 “ from the principles which they adopt. ‘The integrity and
 “ sufficiency of the written revelation of God’s will has been
 “ openly impugned by them.

“ When they teach, that the Eucharist is *a continually*
 “ *renewed sacrifice for reconciliation with God, and for the*
 “ *expiation of sin*, I think they are deviating from the original
 “ institution, and setting up their own fancies in the place of
 “ God’s ordinances.”

Not one member of the Right Rev. Bench has dropped a syllable in approbation of the doctrines of the sect. We shall add the testimony against it of a distinguished colonial Bishop, the Right Rev. Daniel Wilson, of Calcutta :—

“ It is to me a matter of surprise and shame, that, in the
 “ 19th century, we should have *the fundamental position of*
 “ *the whole system of Popery* virtually re-asserted in the
 “ bosom of that very Church which was reformed so deter-
 “ minately three centuries since from this same evil, by the
 “ doctrine, and labours, and martyrdom of Cranmer and his
 “ fellow-sufferers. What ! are we to have all the fond tenets
 “ which formerly sprung from the traditions of men re-intro-
 “ duced, in however modified a form, amongst us ? Are we
 “ to have a refined transubstantiation ; the sacraments, and
 “ not faith, the chief means of salvation ; a confused and
 “ uncertain mixture of the merits of Christ and inherent
 “ grace, in the matter of justification ; remission of sins and
 “ the new creation in Christ Jesus confined, or almost con-
 “ fined, to baptism ; perpetual doubt of pardon to the
 “ penitent after that sacrament ; the duty and advantage of

“ self-imposed austerities ; the innocency of prayers for the
 “ dead ; and similar tenets and usages, which generate a
 “ spirit of bondage, again asserted among us ? And is
 “ the paramount authority of the inspired volume, and
 “ the doctrine of the grace of God in our justification by
 “ the merits of Jesus Christ, which reposes on that autho-
 “ rity, to be again weakened and obscured by such human
 “ superadditions, and a new edifice of will-worship, and
 “ ‘ voluntary humility,’ and ‘ the rudiments of the world,’
 “ as the apostle speaks, to be erected once more, in the place
 “ of the simple gospel of a crucified Saviour ? ”

The Scriptures, Articles, Liturgy, the writings of the fathers of the Reformation, the declaration of so many of the living prelates as have spoken—and if others have been silent, it is because they would not give too much encouragement to sectarians whose ruling vice is vanity—these are surely enough to acquit the Church of any inclination to *non-Protestant* doctrines. And to the rest of the clergy who respect the episcopal order without adoring it, such advice as we have quoted from such men must be sufficient. If there are any who, as it is said, take liberties with the Liturgy, their number must be small, for we have never heard of them ; but, if there are any, their misconduct is no apology for a relapse, however slight, into Popish practices and Popish doctrines. Popery is *the* enemy, and he is no true Protestant who is ingenious in searching for any other.

(From the *Standard* of March 25, 1841.)

TO THE EDITOR.

Oxford, March 24.

SIR,—Although you have declined entering into any further controversy respecting the “ Tract for the Times,”

recently condemned by the authorities of the University of Oxford, I hope that you will not refuse the admission into your columns of a plain matter of fact of some importance. "It is said," observes a writer in the *Morning Chronicle*, "that the leaders of the Tract party are in possession of correspondence with high ecclesiastical authorities, which protects them from ecclesiastical censure." Now it happens that letters have been received by members of this University from the Bishops of London, Winchester, Chester, Chichester, and Ripon, strongly condemning the Tract in question, independently of the more general censures of the Bishops of Exeter and Calcutta, which you put before your readers in a leading article the other day.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

A MEMBER OF CONVOCATION.

(From the *Standard* of March 9, 1841.)

TO THE EDITOR.

Oxford, March 8, 1841.

SIR,—The bearing of this communication upon certain recent statements and imputations will at once be understood when the well-known connection of Mr. Newman with the "Tracts for the Times" is taken into account.

In November, 1839, the Vice-Chancellor of the University, and the Bishop of the Diocese, each separately and independently disapproving of the doctrine inculcated from St. Mary's pulpit by a gentleman, a follower and friend of Mr. Newman, and appointed by him to preach there as his deputy, officially admonished and reproved him.

In support of this assertion I enclose you my name and address, and am, your obedient Servant,

A MEMBER OF CONVOCATION.

